(b) how many of them are living below poverty line and its percentage of the total number of senior citizens;

(c) how many of them have been granted old age pension;

(d) whether Government have formulated a national policy in this regard;

(e) if so, the salient features thereof;

(f) the present status of implementation of the policy; and

(g)what new steps Government propose to take to provide relief and succours to the senior citizens?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) The number of senior citizens (above 60 years) as per the Census of India 2001 is 76, 622, 321. This is 7.45% of India's total population. No data is available regarding the number of older persons below the poverty line.

(c) The total number of beneficiaries under National Old Age Pension Scheme during the year 2004-05 is 61,62,598.

(d) to (f) Yes, Sir. The Government has formulated the National Policy on Older Persons (NPOP), covering all aspects such as financial security, health care and nutrition, shelter/housing, protection of life and property and welfare of elderly. The Government has set up National Council for Older Persons (NCOP) and Inter Ministerial Committee (IMC) with the aim of effective implementation of the National Policy on Older Persons. The Ministry regularly monitors the progress in regard to implementation of NPOP through meetings of NCOP and IMC.

(g)This Ministry is in the process of formulating a legislation aiming to provide maintenance, care and protection of parents and senior citizens.

Orphaned children

559. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of orphaned children in the country, particularly in Maharashtra;

(b) whether Government have received any notice in the month of September, 2005 from the Hon'ble Supreme Court for extending the adoption rights by revising Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956; and

(c) if so, Government's view and reaction thereto with concern of the huge number of orphaned children who need parental support?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment does not maintain information on the number of orphaned children in the country.

(b) A notice has been received in the Writ Petition (Civil) No. 470 of 2005 filed by Shabnam Hashmi before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

(c) A Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 includes provisions for enabling adoption of orphaned children.

National Commission for dlenotified tribes, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes

560. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what were the stated objectives of the National Commission for Denotified Tribes, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes;

(b) whether the stated objectives of the Commission have been achieved;

(c) if not, the reasons for the dissolution n of the Commission;

(d) whether Government have any plan to set up another Commission for these sections; and

(e) if so, what is the time framework?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) The National Commission for Denotified Tribes, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes was constituted to study the developmental aspects of